

Kirkland, Bellevue and Redmond have made this service part of their regular solid waste collection. Kirkland and Redmond also recycle food wastes from businesses. We'd like to expand these programs to serve more of King County's population.

Why is soiled paper and food scrap collection so important?

It represents about one-quarter of the current waste stream and it currently isn't being recycled. Paper decomposes quickly and actually improves the quality of the compost produced from food scraps and yard waste.



Why aren't these garbage rules standardized among local jurisdictions?

Garbage rules are standardized, for the most part: Seattle does its own solid waste planning, we plan for the unincorporated areas of King County and the cities outside Seattle. We also serve a somewhat different population: Seattle is more urban and has a higher concentration of businesses.

As a single jurisdiction, Seattle can make these sorts of changes more rapidly. King County would work with our solid waste partners, the cities, haulers, recyclers and others to make a change like this.



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TALES FROM THE WASTE-LESS LAND

Master Recycler Composter (MRC) Newsletter Winter 2005

You're Invited to the 2005 MRC Standard Training!

This year's MRC standard training will be held in SeaTac beginning Wednesday, January 26, 2005. Classes will be held every Wednesday from 6:15-9:00pm through March 16, 2005. There are also three Saturday classes, held from 9am - 3pm on January 29, February 5, and March 12, 2005. All classes are at SeaTac City Hall, 4800 S. 188th St in SeaTac, except for the Saturday classes (various locations).

What better way to get current about the latest recycling and composting information than to attend one or more of the 2005 standard training classes? We encourage any current MRC volunteers to attend any or all of the 2005 standard training classes, either as mentors to new MRCs or as regular attendees.

Please e-mail susan@cascadiaconsulting.com or call the MRC Hotline 206-343-8505 to sign up.



Date	Topic
Wed. 1/26	Welcome to the MRC Program! Introductions & King County's new "Zero Waste of Resources" initiative
Sat. 1/29	Facility tours of Enumclaw Transfer Station, Cedar Hills Landfill and Cedar Grove Composting (Meet at SeaTac City Hall)
Wed. 2/2	Recycling overview & tour of Cascade Recycling Facility (Waste Management's recycling facility in Woodinville).
Sat. 2/5	Yard Waste Composting & tour of Highline Botanical Gardens (North SeaTac Park Community Center)
Wed. 2/9	Natural Yard Care practices
Wed. 2/16	Watersheds & Water Conservation
Wed. 2/23	Household Hazardous Wastes
Wed. 3/2	Electronics Recycling & tour of <i>Total Reclaim</i> - electronics recycling facility in Seattle (Total Reclaim)
Wed. 3/9	Green Building Practices
Sat. 3/12	Worm Bin Construction and Natural Lawn Care (North SeaTac Park Community Center)
Wed. 3/16	MRC Graduation

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Find Your City's Recycling Coordinator!

You can find the most up-to-date contact information for your city's recycling coordinator or recycling contact on the new King County Solid Waste Division website: <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/>. Select your city from the pull-down menu on the left side of the page. Click on *Contacts* to be taken to the bottom of your city's recycling page to find the most current contact information for your recycling coordinator.

Not online? Call your city's office to get updated information.

Swap & Save!

Denise Roux has many plastic nursery pots to give to anyone who is interested. She has many square and round 4" pots, as well as 1-gallon nursery pots. Please give her a call 253-351-0956.



There is a new garage/yard sale announcement area on the King County Solid Waste Division website! Announce your own sale, or check out garage sales others are having online at <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/exchange/garage.asp>.

In the Sun

As the 2004 year closes, we would like to recognize those MRC volunteers who have reached their 40-hour commitment goal during the year! The following volunteers reached (and many have surpassed!) 40 hours of outreach:

Steve Tracy
Kathy Pouncy
Theresa Fancher
Emily Weisenburger
Eva Palka

Thanks to all our MRC volunteers, whether completing 40 hours or 400, we thank you for your time, dedication, energy & enthusiasm. This program is a success because of the wonderful work you do - THANK YOU!

Upcoming Outreach

- March 19 – Molbak's Nursery Q&A 10-12
- March 19 – Lake Forest Park Dig It Green Fair
2 MRCs per shift:
8:30 – 11:30
11:30 – 2:00
- April 9 – Molbak's Nursery Q&A 10-12
- April 23 – Molbak's Nursery Q&A 10-12
- May 14 – Molbak's Nursery Q&A 10-12
- May 28 – Molbak's Nursery Q&A 10-12



To sign up for any of these events, please visit the MRC website, www.mrcvolunteer.org, e-mail the volunteer coordinator susan@cascadiaconsulting.com, or call the MRC Hotline, 206-343-8505.

Which Is Better For the Environment, Paper or Plastic Bags?

Bill Rathje, a fellow at the Archaeology Center of Stanford University and director of The Garbage Project, and a leading authority on what is in America's garbage, has this response: "In a normal, well-run landfill, paper bags do not biodegrade any faster, over at least 40 years, than plastic. Paper bags are much bulkier than plastic, so they fill up more landfill space. They're three to five times bulkier than plastic, and you can see that yourself at the grocery. Landfills are closing down because they're full. From that perspective, plastic is much better than paper." But Rathje adds that regardless of your bag choice, it's what you do after you pick up that initial bag that makes a difference. "Take a bag when you go to the store that you can reuse for something else. The more you reuse it, the better it is. Even if you take your lunch in a paper or plastic bag, that's good. The goal is to use it again for something else. If it's easier for you to do that with plastic, take plastic. If it's easier with paper, take paper," Rathje says. "The bottom line is that paper takes

up more volume in landfills, but you should use what you can reuse." Thanks to the Waste Prevention Forum for this information. To sign up for the forum email list, contact Tom Watson at King County SWD (tom.watson@metrokc.gov).

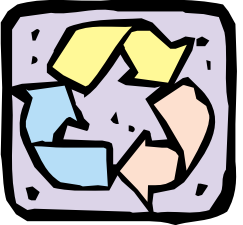
A Note on Holiday Recycling from Kathleen Notley

"I'll take the cards no one wants because they have no envelopes... Sure, I'll take those stickers some charity sent you that you won't use, housemate. And yes, I'll take those pretty pieces of paper too small to wrap anything, Fran..." I haven't bought much holiday paper or cards in years. This is more fun. I get a charge out of pairing items that will be useful when they find each other. For example, I converted an unwanted hot pink return envelope tucked in a magazine into a bearer of Christmas card cheer. I covered the return envelope writing & mail barcode with the 'leftovers' from computer mailing label sheets. Then I found the brightest card in the free card stack, beaming as I addressed it to a friend. It feels good to bring three different papers together and using every little bit, not wasting anything.

Recycling and using things to their fullest potential are behaviors that reflect my values and creativity. How small a footprint can I leave here today? Kathleen M. Notley, MRC Classes 5 and 22
Thanks for the inspiration, Kathy!

New Recycling Requirements for Seattle

As of Jan. 1, 2005, the City of Seattle is requiring the recycling of paper and cardboard, aluminum and tin cans, and glass and plastic bottles for Seattle residents and businesses. The new Seattle rules will not lead to any immediate rate increases, or penalties for failing to comply. Those who put large amounts of paper and other recyclables in their garbage cans will receive notices this year explaining the new rules. In 2006, businesses and multifamily dwellings with large trash bins will get three warnings before the city charges them fifty dollars. People living in single-family homes who violate the rules in 2006 will not have their garbage picked up until they get prohibited materials out of their cans.



Is King County considering a similar ban on recyclable items in garbage?

King County is always looking for ways to turn waste into resource and reduce the amount of recyclable materials entering the waste stream. There is no plan to impose a similar ban at this time, but it's an option we might consider in the future.

Are there any changes in King County's waste acceptance policies on the horizon?

Yes. The Solid Waste Division has proposed to ban or limit the disposal of electronic waste, mercury-containing devices and sharps. The Solid Waste Division has received comments on these proposed changes from interested parties including King County cities, the Seattle-King County Public Health Department and the solid waste haulers. Seattle and our neighboring counties have already implemented similar bans. We'll keep you updated.

We've recently instituted a program at our transfer stations to collect textiles (clothing, sheets, drapes) to be recycled into rags and blankets.

We've also participated in pilot programs with five cities to collect household food wastes and soiled paper (think pizza boxes or sandwich wrappers) in yard waste collection containers for composting. The cities of